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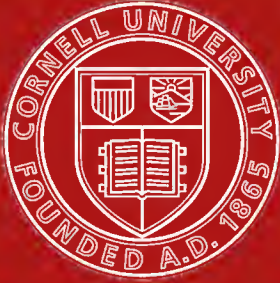
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MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

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Edited by W. Shaw Sparrow

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FRONTISPIECE


MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

(From the Collection of W. H. Lever, Esq., M.P.)

BORN IN THE ROYAL PALACE OF LINLITHGOW, DECEMBER THE EIGHTH, 1542, THE DAUGHTER AND SOLE HEIRESS OF JAMES V. OF SCOTLAND, BY MARIE OF LORRAINE HIS SECOND QUEEN, A FRENCH PRINCESS OF THE FAMILY OF GUISE. MARY WAS EXECUTED AT FOTHERINGAY CASTLE, FEBRUARY THE EIGHTH, 1587. HER STORY HAS MADE A WORLD-WIDE APPEAL TO THE IMAGINATION OF MEN, AFFECTING SCHILLER AND ALFIERI NO LESS THAN SCOTT AND THE HISTORIANS; BUT THE MYSTERY OF HER LIFE REMAINS UNSOLVED. NONE CAN ESTIMATE CORRECTLY HER REAL NATURE, NOR GIVE THE TRUE MEASURE OF HER CHARACTER.



MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

WITH PICTURES IN COLOUR BY JAMES
ORROCK R. LAND SIR JAMES LINTON R.
THE STORY BY WALTER WOOD

..
EDITED BY
W. SHAW SPARROW

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PREFACE



ALL that concerns the life of Mary Stuart has what may be called a visiting interest, for it travels far and is welcomed everywhere. Indeed, the great mystery of Mary's character and the pathos of her blood-wrecked career have a magical attraction felt by everybody who comes in contact with them; and to such a degree are they felt that partisanship becomes wellnigh inevitable.

Now, there is an element of surprise in this peculiar fascination, this survival through the dead centuries of a woman's charm over the affections of a forward-looking race,

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

because the oldest supposed portraits of Mary do not bear out the historical testimony as to her loveliness; indeed, they are stiff and formal works with as much seduction about them, perhaps, as the income tax possesses; and thus the popular belief in the beauty of Mary Stuart has found in tradition a persuasive champion, more chivalrous and more powerful than the alleged portraiture of Clouet and others.

If Mary herself has not been harmed by the libels in paint, art certainly has not suffered; rather has it been aided by the fact that Mary of Scotland, unlike her enemy Queen Elizabeth, is a subject to be created by the imagination without any settled and accepted guidance from historic facts concern-

PREFACE

ing her features and her person. True, the full-length recumbent figure in Westminster Abbey—a work in alabaster, commissioned by Mary's son in 1606, executed by Cornelius and William Cure, and painted by James Mauncy—is a noble effigy ; but it has not yet passed into history and art as the most authentic portrait and the most truthful.

Painters, then, may represent Mary Stuart in accordance with their own wishes or the decorative needs of their pictures, and if they think fit, each one of them may decline to stereotype his own conception of the spirited and ill-fated Queen.

It is not clearly realized to-day that art, so helpful to religion in the past, may be as serviceable now to the study of a nation's

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

history—serviceable, that is to say, not only to those unlucky ones at school who are for ever haunted by the gathering hazards of competitive examinations, but to *us* also, the busy plodders in life's forced march, who have but little time in which to renew the history lessons which we forgot to learn thoroughly, during the easier schooldays of a generation ago.

The present book touches history and art in many ways, on many sides. The text, unencumbered with fruitless doubts and entangled disputes, is written to be read and remembered; it is brief, spirited, and full of suggestion. Who, for instance, can read in it of the murder of Rizzio, without thinking both of its affect on the Queen during her

PREFACE

pregnancy, and also of its influence upon her child and his descendants? Cowardice and deceit came into the family with James, and from those vices of character may spring a stubbornness full of mischief and a sensitiveness of feeling that responds feverishly to art and beauty in all their forms and manifestations. It may be that the historian should detect the shade of Rizzio behind Charles the First on the scaffold at Whitehall.

Again, the outdoor sketches in this book, reproduced in colour, are not only faithful as topographical views; they are handled with ease and grace, having an assured touch sensitive to all atmospheric influences and well fitted to represent the sky's purity and its changing pageantry. We see in these

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

sketches what time has spared to us of the houses and prisons in which Mary Stuart lived and suffered; and the buildings, happily, are not isolated from their surroundings, but stand environed by their own unchanging landscapes, like grim armoured knights at ease amid the enduring lustiness of the British fields and woodlands.

As to the figure subjects, they represent the chief characters in the tragedy of Mary Stuart and the principal episodes also, and all are painted by a distinguished artist who occupies, in the beautiful school of English water-colour, a place equal and similar to that which Terburg holds in the art of Holland.

W. SHAW SPARROW.

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PLATE 2

LINLITHGOW PALACE

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

QUEEN MARY WAS BORN IN LINLITHGOW PALACE, WHICH WAS A FAVOURITE STUART RESIDENCE. IT IS SEVENTEEN MILES FROM EDINBURGH, ON THE EDGE OF A SMALL LAKE.



MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS



NE of the many cries of despair in the early career of Mary Stuart dwells in the memory, because it seems to show that sorrows may have their gift of prophecy.

“Sure I was born to everlasting cares ! Like hydra heads, one no sooner disappears, than another rises in its room, and drives me from repose.” So wrote Mary Stuart, when, only twenty-five years old, her stormy life was more than half done and she was drifting surely into the power of that relentless enemy of whom she had said with prophetic bitterness, “I know that my death alone can

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

gratify the unceasing malice of the English Queen.”

Sorrow attended Mary’s birth in the peaceful solitude of Linlithgow Castle, and kept her as close a companion throughout her life as she herself in later years was held a prisoner by Elizabeth. Her parents, James V. and Mary of Guise, had been married in the Palace, and two sons had been born there ; but both had prematurely died. James had fled to Falkland Palace after his disastrous defeat by the English at Solway Moss, and lying broken-hearted on his deathbed he heard the news of a daughter’s birth.

“Is it so ?” he asked gloomily. “Then God’s will be done ! The race of Stuart came with a lass and will go with a lass !”

HER CHILDHOOD

They were almost the last words he spoke. By his death the infant princess, born on December 8th, 1542, became Queen of Scotland. She was only a week old when she inherited the crown ; yet even then she was the subject of a fierce and bitter strife. James had been vanquished by Henry VIII., and that overmastering king resolved that the infant should marry his son Edward. He succeeded so far as to conclude an arrangement with the English party in Scotland ; but the great body of the Scotch people, as well as the French, were hostile to the scheme. Henry, therefore, assailed both his enemies, and while Scotland was invaded by Lord Hertford, and Leith and Edinburgh were partly burnt, the King himself crossed

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

the Channel and seized Boulogne. The struggle was maintained until it was clear that the alliance would never be accomplished. French intrigue and influence had been at work, and it was agreed that the little Queen should in course of time marry the Dauphin, and maintain her close association with the throne of France. Tumult raged about her cradle, and it never ceased. Mary was a menace to the Crown of England at her birth ; and the danger passed only with the fall of the axe which ended the tragedy of her life.

Within a year of her birth Mary was crowned by the Archbishop of St. Andrew's in Stirling Castle. "Grey Stirling, Bulwark of the North," was considered impregnable,

STIRLING CASTLE

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

PERCHED ON A PRÉCIPICE, THIRTY-SIX MILES FROM EDINBURGH, THIS ROYAL FORTRESS IS ASSOCIATED WITH SCOTLAND'S EARLY HISTORY. MARY WHEN AN INFANT WAS REMOVED TO THE CASTLE, AND HERE, WHILE SLEEPING IN HER BED, SHE NARROWLY ESCAPED DEATH BY FIRE, BEING ALMOST STIFLED BEFORE SHE WAS RESCUED. SO GREAT WAS HER PERIL THAT IT RECALLED TO THE POPULAR MIND A PROPHECY OF ANCIENT DATE; THAT "A QUEEN WOULD BE BURNT AT STIRLING."



SHE SAILS FOR FRANCE

yet for greater safety the child was taken to Inchmahome Priory, on the lake of Monteith ; but after a very short stay she was conveyed to the Gibraltar-like fortress of Dumbarton Castle, so that she should be as near as possible to France.

Mary was a mere child when, in July, 1548, the arrangement was made to marry her to the Dauphin, and in the month following she sailed for Brest in one of the royal galleys of that country. She was educated with the French royal children, her chief instructor being Marguerite of France, the cultured sister of Henry II. It was the first object of her teachers to instil into her a love of France and loyalty to its people, and this they did so well that Mary

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

at all times spoke and wrote French far more fluently than English, which she was not taught, and in which she was never very perfect.

It was not until she was Elizabeth's prisoner that she tried to learn English, and her first attempts at writing the language are pathetically humorous. "Excus my ivel vreitin this furst tym," is a specimen of Mary's spelling when she was twenty-six years old.

Brilliant and beautiful, Mary grew into a tall and stately girl, and gave abundant promise of that fascination which in after days won universal admiration. To an unrivalled loveliness she added all the subtle charms and graces of an educated gifted woman ;

HER EDUCATION IN FRANCE

and was possessed of such an irresistible personality that as early as 1558 the Cardinal of Lorraine, her uncle, declared that he had never seen her equal even in France.

In judging of her actions later, when Mary undertook that long and bitter struggle with Elizabeth, fairness demands allowance for her training in the Court of France. Child though she was she could not be blind or deaf to the things seen and heard in that great home of fashion, intrigue, love and vanity. No act escaped her watchful eyes, none failed to leave its mark upon her swift intelligence. The peril was recognised, and in 1550 Mary's mother arranged to remove her to "a healthier moral atmosphere," but the intention was never carried out, and the

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

princess remained in France and mingled with its brilliant and pleasure-loving people until her splendid and costly marriage at Notre Dame with the Dauphin, when she was only in her sixteenth year, and he was even younger.

Mary was then handsome and high-spirited, famous even in a Court remarkable for beautiful and clever women, and it was in her, now that she was actually allied with a powerful reigning Catholic family, that the hopes of Romanists throughout the English world were centred. They looked to her for guidance and victory, and she for her part never faltered from her lofty purpose of restoring Catholicism to the people amongst whom she had been born. She aspired even

PLATE 4

DUMBARTON CASTLE

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

THIS FORTRESS, BUILT ON A ROCK 240 FEET HIGH AT THE JUNCTION OF THE LEVEN WITH THE CLYDE, WAS ONE OF THE CHIEF STRONGHOLDS OF THE SCOTTISH SOVEREIGNS. MARY, AS A CHILD-QUEEN, LIVED HERE, AND IT WAS AT DUMBARTON CASTLE THAT MUCH OF HER SECRET CORRESPONDENCE WAS SEIZED.



HER FIRST HUSBAND

in those early days to wield a sovereign's power, and her ambition ripened swiftly into resolve. Yet the very outset of her public life was a prelude to the pitiless disasters which blasted her existence. It was a tragedy and a martyrdom. The Dauphin, undersized and physically weak, was already gripped by disease, and Mary the bride became a nurse whose devotion was unbounded. Now, more than ever, it was needful that her husband's life should be preserved, for he had become King of France.

Child-wife though she was, Mary found herself plunged into political troubles. Queen Mary of England had recently died, and Mary, as great-granddaughter of Henry VII., claimed the English crown ; but Elizabeth

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

had been already made Queen, in her twenty-sixth year, amid the enthusiastic plaudits of the people. Despite this, Mary and her boy husband, ill advised by party politicians, called themselves King and Queen, not of Scotland only, but also of England and Ireland. Here was cause enough for lasting hate between the two women, and hate which was intensified when Mary strove for Catholic supremacy and the excommunication of Elizabeth. She and her adherents had gone to the dangerous extremity of asserting that Elizabeth was illegitimate, because of the annulment of her mother's marriage; and had urged this as a ground for denying her right to the throne of England.

The King of France died in his seventeenth

HER FIRST WIDOWHOOD

year, and for more reasons than affection Mary was the victim of despair and grief. She was no longer Queen of France, and the sudden loss of sovereignty became a heavier blow because the post of power and honour was taken by a cruel and malignant rival—the infamous Catherine de Medici. Almost banished from the Court of which Catherine was the arrogant mistress, neglected by the subjects who had recently adored and flattered her, Mary sought to leave the country which was now scarcely mindful of her presence. She turned her thoughts to Scotland. Here again there was little to comfort or attract her, for by this time she was only a queen in name. Catholicism was falling, Mary's mother was dead, and it seemed likely

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

that by marrying the Earl of Arran, who was next to Mary in the Scottish succession, Elizabeth would gain the crown of Scotland. Elizabeth, not for the only time, wavered in her flirtations with marriageable men, and capriciously rejected the Scottish nobleman.

Now, if ever, was the time for Mary to return. She saw her chance, and those who desired her sovereignty observed it too. They persuaded her, and she listened willingly, particularly as various proposals of marriage, suggested by the Guises, had been negatived by the opposition of Catherine de Medici. Mary sailed from Calais on August 15th, 1561, in a galley rowed by slaves who were chained to their oars. These poor wretches aroused her sincere compassion, and so long as

PLATE 5

MARY SAILS FROM
FRANCE: HER FAREWELL
TO THAT COUNTRY

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

MARY STUART'S FIRST HUSBAND, FRANCIS II. OF FRANCE, DIED DECEMBER 5th, 1560, AND TO ESCAPE THE INTRIGUES OF THE FRENCH COURT SHE SOON AFTER TOOK SHIP FOR SCOTLAND. IT IS SAID THAT SHE REMAINED ON THE DECK OF THE VESSEL, GAZING AT THE SHORES TILL THEY HAD VANISHED FROM HER VIEW; THEN RETIRING TO HER CABIN SHE WROTE SOME VERSES ON THE OCCASION, FULL OF REGRET, SORROW, TENDERNESS AND PATHOS.



SHE RETURNS TO SCOTLAND

she remained on board she saved them from the brutal beatings with which their taskmasters incited them to work. As the galley left the harbour, a vessel which was trying to enter struck on the bar and sank with all hands—a tragic episode which deepened the sadness of farewell to France. The melancholy of her husband's death still oppressed Mary, and as she stood on the deck of the clumsy little ship which bore her from the beloved land of her adoption she was overcome by grief, and looked despairingly at the receding coast. She gazed through tear-dimmed eyes until the shore became invisible ; then she went below and put her sorrow down on record in pathetic verse.

Reaching Holyrood, that noble home of

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Scottish monarchs, Mary was received with bonfires and the "dismal chanting of Reformation melodies," fit prelude to the stern hostility of John Knox, who came into early collision with the French-trained and imperious beauty, and remained inexorable even when she pleaded and wept before him. She was to him a proud, crafty and sinful idolater, and he would have none of her ; yet he was not unconscious of her charms, for he spoke of others being beguiled and bewitched by those enchantments which he had himself resisted.

* Mary returned to Scotland at a time of wondrous turmoil, even for that land of trouble and unrest. Above all things there was ceaseless friction with Elizabeth, whose

MARY AND QUEEN ELIZABETH

peace of mind had gone with Mary's coming. Never were two more irreconcilable opponents matched than these, never was there a struggle waged in which it was more necessary that mutual concessions should be made; yet it was impossible for either woman's nature to submit. Fear of Mary forced Elizabeth at last to commit that crime of judicial murder of a helpless captive, which will remain a blot for all time on her reputation; while jealous hatred of the Queen of England drove Mary to the last extremity of insult and personal injury. Futile efforts were made to bring about a meeting, so that there might be a friendly understanding; and at last the sovereigns settled down to their long struggle for supremacy.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Mary steadily fulfilled the task of making the best of her trials and the most of her opportunities. She had amazing powers of winning the confidence of her political advisers and the love of her subjects, and she captured both. Her hope of gaining the English crown was strengthened daily in her mind, but the slightness of her chance of succeeding to the coveted throne was revealed during Elizabeth's illness in 1562, for then only one supporter declared himself in Mary's favour—a crushing blow to her hopes, and a source of deep humiliation.

This period of Mary's life was marred by that squalid tragedy of the poet Chastelard, which has been overshadowed by the Rizzio murder ; yet it was a startling enough episode

VIEW OF HOLYROOD
FROM BURNS'S MONUMENT

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

*(From the Collection of Dr. John Marshall,
Rector of the High School, Edinburgh.)*

HOLYROOD, THAT NOBLE HOME OF SCOTTISH MONARCHS, WAS ORIGINALLY A CONVENT. IT WAS MARY'S CHIEF RESIDENCE, AND BOTH SHE AND HER SON JAMES TRANSACTED MOST OF THEIR PUBLIC BUSINESS HERE. WHEN JAMES ASSUMED THE ENGLISH CROWN HE ALLOWED THE PALACE TO DECAY, AND GRADUALLY HOLYROOD BECAME A RUIN WITHOUT LOSING ITS ROMANCE.



THE POET CHASTELARD

even in the drama of the Queen of Scotland. Pierre de Boscosel de Chastelard, a romantic and impressionable youth of twenty, had come from France in Mary's train, and had fallen under the spell of her fascinations. The Queen imprudently allowed him to believe that his love was not unwelcome, and she amused herself by accepting and encouraging his fervid effusions. Misinterpreting her attitude, reckless of the peril into which he thrust himself because of his presumption, Chastelard overstepped the bounds of favouritism, and secreted himself in Mary's room. Through her forbearance and intercession the rash admirer was pardoned. But the madness of love was stronger than the fear of death itself. He refused to believe that

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

one who had been so greatly favoured by the royal patronage as he had been could come to evil at the hands of either Mary or her Court. He watched for another chance of forcing himself upon her, and it came, in 1563, at Burntisland, when she was resting on the way to St. Andrew's. For the second time he hid himself in Mary's sleeping apartment. He was again dragged forth ; but neither his prayers for pardon nor any pity which Mary may have felt availed him now. He was hurried off and put to death. On the scaffold he raved of Mary, and just before the axe fell he exclaimed, " Adieu ! most lovely and cruel of Princesses ! "

Strong though Mary was, and confident as she felt in her power to realise her own

MARRIAGE SCHEMES

ambition, yet it was needful that she should marry again and ensure her succession. She saw the unchecked triumph of her English rival, the swift advance of Protestantism, and the decay of that Catholicism which it was her life's design to re-establish. Even then her Scottish throne was tottering. She sought a powerful alliance, and negotiated and temporised between the son of the King of Spain and a member of the House of Austria. Mary inclined to Don Carlos, with the vast intention of becoming head of England, Scotland and Spain.

Elizabeth saw the greatness of the danger which threatened her from such a marriage, and plainly said that the union would destroy all hopes of peace between herself and Mary.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Hostility from France to the project helped Elizabeth, and though no threats daunted Mary, yet she abandoned her purpose when the King of Spain, powerful though he was, felt it politic to discountenance the wedding. Baffled at all points, Mary was overwhelmed by anger and depression, and her wrath was all the more intense because it was clear that if she re-married it must be with a man either chosen or approved by the English Queen. Elizabeth would have had her marry her own favourite the Earl of Leicester, but Mary scornfully declined to be controlled, although she had professed to wish for Elizabeth's guidance in her marriage, and wrote : "Leicester, raised but by her partial favour, and long the mirror of her

PLATE 7

MARY STUART AND
CHASTELARD

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

CHASTELARD, A ROMANTIC AND IMPRESSIONABLE YOUNG MAN, WITH A LOVE FOR MUSIC, POETRY AND THE QUEEN, HAD COME FROM FRANCE IN THE SUITE OF THE MARSHAL, d'AMVILLE WHEN HE ACCOMPANIED MARY TO SCOTLAND. IN NOVEMBER, 1562, CHASTELARD VISITED THE QUEEN AT EDINBURGH, BEARING WITH HIM A LETTER FROM THE MARSHAL AND A BOOK OF POETRY OF HIS OWN COMPOSITION. THE BOOK WAS GRACIOUSLY RECEIVED, MARY GIVING CHASTELARD A HORSE IN RETURN; THUS ENCOURAGED, THE POET FELL IN LOVE AND SOON LOST ALL PRUDENCE AND SELF-CONTROL. IN JANUARY, 1563, HE WAS DISCOVERED ONE EVENING UNDER THE QUEEN'S BED, ARMED WITH A SWORD AND A DAGGER; AND A SECOND SIMILAR ACT OF WILD FOLLY PROVOKED THE COUNCIL TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT CHASTELARD WAS BEHEADED IN THE MARKET PLACE OF ST. ANDREW'S.



HER WEDDING WITH DARNLEY

loosest wishes, must now be recompensed with the Scottish Crown, but it shall perish first ! ”

These dangerous difficulties were temporarily settled by the disastrous alliance with Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, a mere youth who was the next lineal heir to the Crown of England, after Mary, and also claimed the succession to the Scottish throne. From Dunblane, on the banks of Allan Water, Chisholm, the Bishop, took to Edinburgh the Pope's dispensation for the ceremony. Mary married Darnley, to the consternation of those who had opposed a union with either Spain or Austria, and from that day of bridal began the unbroken succession of sufferings which were to end in her nineteen

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

years' imprisonment and death. To Elizabeth especially the match was a heavy blow, for the union with Darnley not only enabled Mary more flagrantly to defy the English Queen, but also strengthened her position as a claimant to the English throne.

It was now that there entered actively into Mary's life, to pit his power against her own, her half-brother, James Stuart, Earl Murray. He was a Protestant, and at the head of his rebellious Lords and their followers he threatened the Queen's supremacy. She met the Earl in a fearless spirit, even to putting pistols in her belt and marching forth against him at Glasgow. He fled and sought refuge in England, and left Mary triumphant on the field.

HENRY STUART, LORD DARNLEY

Even while flushed with this great victory the Queen was forced to recognise that however politically necessary her marriage with Darnley was, in uniting the two nearest heirs to the English throne, she could not hope for happiness with him. A wild liver in wild times, he was also foolish, vain, and stubborn, and a very master in arousing hate and causing trouble everywhere.

Mary was now a beautiful, accomplished woman of twenty-two, with a knowledge of the world unrivalled by that of any woman of her own age and times. She was steadily pursuing the fight with Elizabeth, and it seemed as if success might well be hers in resolving to become an absolute monarch and to re-establish Catholicism in the

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Kingdom. No one saw this better than Elizabeth, and Mary at least had the consolation of knowing that her very existence was a torture to that other Queen in London. The Darnley marriage was no sooner accomplished, than Elizabeth was bluntly requested to mind her own business and not to interfere in matters which concerned the Scottish sovereign's kingdom only. Elizabeth was stunned into quietness for the time, but the insult rankled, and she waited for the chance to deal a crushing blow by way of retaliation.

Bewildered by her difficulties, harassed by the dangers which constantly attended her, and affected in her health, Mary was drawing swiftly towards that period of her life which

PLATE 8

HENRY STUART, LORD
DARNLEY (1541-1567) SECOND
HUSBAND OF MARY
QUEEN OF SCOTS

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

MARY STUART, PLEASED BY THE BEAUTY OF DARNLEY, MARRIED HIM ON THE 29TH OF JULY, 1565. THE PREVIOUS DAY SHE HAD CREATED HIM EARL OF ROSS AND DUKE OF ALBANY, AND PROCLAIMED HIM KING. ONE EVENING IN MARCH, 1566, DARNLEY WROTE HIS TRUE CHARACTER IN THE HISTORY OF SCOTLAND. WITH THE HELP OF LORD RUTHVEN AND OTHER ACCOMPLICES HE MADE FORCIBLE ENTRY INTO HOLYROOD PALACE, AND IN THE PRESENCE OF THE QUEEN SEIZED DAVID RIZZIO, WHOM THEY MURDERED IN THE NEXT ROOM. DARNLEY HIMSELF CAME BY HIS VIOLENT DEATH NOT TWELVE MONTHS LATER, A DEATH PLANNED AND CARRIED OUT BY THE EARL OF BOTHWELL.



THE STORY OF DAVID RIZZIO

was darkened by the tragedy of David Rizzio. A skilled musician and the owner of a matchless voice, Rizzio was an Italian who had won his sovereign's favour and especial confidence. From songster and instrumentalist he advanced to the position of Mary's secretary and political adviser, and sheltered by her patronage he defied the savage nobles who were jealous of his power. He might have read his doom in their sullen glances; but he cared as little for their frowns as for the rough hustlings he endured when he was found in consultation with the Queen. His opponents watched his growing power and made crude protests against his influence; but strong in the protection of the throne he disregarded and despised their warnings.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

They were ready to proceed to the last extremity, yet they shrank from carrying out their whispered threats until they were assured of Darnley's help. It was no hard matter to arouse his jealous passion, and persuade him that Rizzio was unduly interfering in the politics of Scotland. There were worse suggestions as to his dealings with his royal mistress, and Darnley gave his willing assent to the murder of the favoured foreigner.

Darnley himself accompanied the fierce and bloodthirsty Scottish nobles who entered Holyrood one March night when Mary was expecting shortly to become a mother. By way of the aisles of the abbey church and a private passage he led them to the apartments of the Queen, where she was supping with

LORD RUTHVEN

the Countess of Argyle and others. Darnley entered and took his place at Mary's side, and the nobles, to the number of eighteen, followed.

Foremost among the murderers was Lord Ruthven, whose determination to remove the favourite made him rise from a sick bed, although he was so weak from an incurable disease that he could not bear the weight of his armour. Lord Ruthven demanded to speak with Rizzio. Instantly Mary, suspicious and alarmed, asked her husband if he knew for what purpose the nobles had come and why they wished to speak with her secretary; but the crafty craven answered that he knew nothing of their purpose.

Mary haughtily commanded Ruthven to

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

withdraw, under pain of punishment for treason, but the powerful lord defied her, and the trembling foreigner knew that he was doomed.

In his terror Rizzio sought refuge just as an affrighted animal might have done. He ran towards his sovereign and sheltered behind her. There at least, remembering her condition, he should have found sanctuary ; but the brutal assassins rushed forward, and hurled the table against Mary. Being unable to reach Rizzio direct they struck at him with daggers over her very shoulder, while some of them stood before her with cocked pistols. Rizzio screamed aloud in terror, begging his mistress for that protection which even her power and resolution could

PLATE 9

DAVID RIZZIO

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

DAVID RIZZIO, SON OF A MUSICIAN AT TURIN, HAD ACCOMPANIED THE PIEDMONTESE AMBASSADOR TO SCOTLAND, AND GAINED INFLUENCE BY HIS MUSICAL TALENTS IN THE QUEEN'S FAMILY. HE CREPT INTO MARY'S FAVOUR AND WAS MADE HER FRENCH SECRETARY. DARNLEY BECAME JEALOUS, AND UNITING HIMSELF WITH SEVERAL MEN OF HIGH RANK, LIKE LORD RUTHVEN, HE FORMED A CONSPIRACY TO MURDER RIZZIO. ONE EVENING IN MARCH, 1566, WHILE MARY WAS AT SUPPER WITH THE COUNTESS OF ARGYLE AND RIZZIO, THE DASTARDLY PLOT CULMINATED IN HOLYROOD PALACE.



THE MURDER OF RIZZIO

not afford, and appealing for mercy to hearts which knew no pity.

They seized and dragged him out of the chamber, screaming and struggling still, and riddled his body with sword and dagger cuts; after which they flung the bleeding corpse down in the doorway, with fifty-six wounds in it. Then Ruthven, faint, pale and ghastly, returned to the disordered room and told the Queen that Rizzio was slain. He accused him of having unduly influenced her in politics and religion.

“Farewell, tears,” said Mary, when she heard the news, “we must now think on vengeance!”

Of love for Darnley there had been little enough to trouble Mary; now that she

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

learned of his complicity in this atrocious deed, loathing of her husband seized her; nor was this aversion overcome by the birth at Edinburgh Castle of a boy, who was to become James VI. of Scotland and James I. of England. If she found any comfort at this dreary crisis it was in her own triumph over Elizabeth, as the mother of a son. Elizabeth was intensely mortified at the event, which to her far-seeing intelligence presented the picture of a future Stuart king of England; she knew also that it gave Mary a popularity in England as well as Scotland which she had not previously possessed. Yet she feigned joy enough to stand godmother to the child; and almost at the same time she influenced the wholesale pardon of the murderers of Rizzio.

· THE CHILD KING, JAMES VI.

The child—pedant and coward in after years, trembling at the very sight of a dagger—was christened at Stirling Castle, and Mary was induced to pardon the assassins, who had been protected by Elizabeth. This she did, excepting one noble, who had snatched the King's dagger and struck at Rizzio with it over Mary's shoulder, and another who had pointed a pistol at her. Incensed because of the inclusion of Morton, one of her traitor lords, Darnley left Stirling without either seeing the Queen or witnessing the christening. He went to Glasgow, and there contracted the then terrible and fatal disease of small-pox.

It was by this time evident that Darnley, King by marriage, was scheming to alter the

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

government so that he could take a more active share in it ; but to all appearances the Queen was reconciled to her husband, and suggested that instead of remaining in Glasgow he should go to Craigmillar Castle, that turret-flanked tower on the hill which was often Mary's home. Darnley refused, and Mary wrote to her secretary, Maitland, to get suitable lodgings for him in Edinburgh, as it was known that the King disliked the palace, and she was anxious that the infant should not risk infection.

Now it was that retribution overtook the King. Already at Craigmillar a conference had been held to find some means of ridding Mary of her husband without imperilling the child. His destruction had been resolved

PLATE 10

MARY'S HALF - BROTHER,
LORD JAMES STUART,
MORE WIDELY KNOWN
AS EARL MURRAY

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

BORN ABOUT 1531, THE NATURAL SON OF JAMES V. OF SCOTLAND, AT ONE TIME FRIENDLY TO MARY: SWERVING FROM HIS LOYALTY HE OPPOSED HER MARRIAGE WITH DARNLEY AS BEING INIMICAL TO HIS OWN INTERESTS; HE FORMED A PLAN TO PLACE HIMSELF AT THE HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT AND RECEIVED MONEY FROM ENGLAND; DRIVEN WITH HIS ASSOCIATES FROM DUMFRIES, HE WENT TO LONDON IN 1565 AND HAD AN INTERVIEW WITH ELIZABETH; HE WAS ACCUSED BY DARNLEY OF A DESIGN TO ASSASSINATE HIM, AND HE WAS A LEADING ACTOR IN THE PLOT THAT BROUGHT ABOUT MARY'S ENFORCED ABDICATION; BUT MURRAY MADE ENEMIES, AND AT LAST, IN THE YEAR 1570, HE WAS SHOT DEAD IN THE STREETS OF LINTHGO BY HAMILTON OF BOTHWELLHAUGH.



THE EARL OF BOTHWELL

upon, and Maitland knew it when he received Mary's letter. Mary herself had consented to the act, prompted by a stronger motive than revenge, for she desired a marriage with the Earl of Bothwell, a ruffian who was famed even among the Border nobles for his villainies, and had a fitting place of refuge in Hermitage Castle, near the Border. The Castle, now a haunted pile, is closely linked with Bothwell's name. It was to its gloomy fastness that he often fled for safety, and in its dungeons many a hopeless captive languished. Maitland showed the letter to Bothwell, who selected a lonely house on a spot called Kirk-o'-Field, afterwards the site of Edinburgh University. Darnley was by this time convalescent, and Mary joined him at Glasgow ; thence they

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

went to Kirk-o'-Field, that place of fatal import in her life, where they spent ten days.

Kirk-o'-Field was a small house of four apartments, and Mary slept in the room above that in which Darnley was a patient. She concealed her real feelings so well as to order up her band of musicians from Holyrood, and in other ways she helped him to endure the weary hours of illness. There was no sign of any danger; nothing to suggest that an appalling disaster was at hand; yet even when security seemed most assured Bothwell was perfecting his plan for Darnley's death. Never was victim more helpless or unenlightened; never were conspirators more bent on their designs. Darnley had shown no mercy

THE MURDER OF DARNLEY

or pity for Rizzio; none was to be extended to him.

It was known that on Sunday evening, February 9th, 1567, Mary would be present at a mask at Holyrood to celebrate a servant's wedding, and Bothwell, being assured of her absence, determined that then the plot should be completed. From the supper table of the Bishop of Argyle, where he had been visiting with the Queen, Bothwell returned to Kirk-o'-Field, and finished his preparations, with the help of others, to blow up the house with bags of gunpowder. He accompanied Mary to the palace, and having seen her safely at the mask returned to Kirk-o'-Field.

Darnley had gone to bed, and four servants were in the little house with him. Suddenly

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

there was a violent explosion which demolished Kirk-o'-Field and killed the King. Bothwell and his friends fled, and it was not until a general alarm had been raised that they pretended to understand the disaster. Bothwell's clumsy cunning prompted him to offer the theory that the house had been destroyed by lightning. Of the five inmates of the building only one escaped. Darnley and his servant were blown away and found dead in their nightdresses some distance from the house, to all appearances but little injured. He was in his twenty-first year and had shared the crown for eighteen months.

Darnley's fate secured for him a degree of sympathy and compassion that were wanting when he lived and would not have

PLATE 11

THE EARL OF BOTHWELL
AT NIGHT WATCHING
THE SOLITARY HOUSE
CALLED KIRK - O' - FIELD

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

IT WAS AT KIRK-O'-FIELD, AT TWO O'CLOCK A.M., ON FEBRUARY THE TENTH, 1567, THAT BOTHWELL MURDERED DARNLEY BY BLOWING UP THE HOUSE WITH GUNPOWDER. IT WAS HIS AMBITION TO BECOME THE THIRD HUSBAND OF MARY STUART, AND TO EFFECT THIS PURPOSE HE PASSED FROM VIOLENCE TO VIOLENCE, SEIZING THE QUEEN AS SHE JOURNEYED FROM EDINBURGH TO STIRLING, AND CARRYING HER TO EDINBURGH CASTLE. ON THE 15TH MAY, 1567, WITHIN THREE MONTHS OF DARNLEY'S MURDER, THE SCANDALOUS WEDDING WAS CELEBRATED.



THE MURDER OF DARNLEY

existed if he had survived his illness, for there was no redeeming feature in his character. He was hated and feared by the people and despised and distrusted by the nobles. Mary had suffered nothing at his hands but sorrow and contumely, yet with womanly contradiction, no sooner had her wish that he should perish been realised than she bewailed her share in his destruction and sought to make atonement by a funeral befitting a King of Scotland. It is certain that she knew who the murderers were, at any rate the prime spirit of them all; nevertheless she went through the form of offering a reward of £2000 for the discovery of the actual committer of the crime and a free pardon to the

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

revealer. Mary shut herself up in Edinburgh Castle, worn out by remorse and fears for her life. When she left she went to Seton House, about nine miles away, with Bothwell in her train. A few weeks only passed before he was tried for the murder. The trial was a sham. Bothwell was acquitted—he was too powerful to be attacked even by the whole of the Queen's adherents ; and as for his own supporters they included Murray, Morton and Maitland.

Bothwell had triumphed thoroughly. Murderer and ruffian, he gave a supper to celebrate his acquittal, and at the finish forced his drunken guests to sign a document which was drawn up by himself in favour of himself. It was a paper in which

AN AMAZING COMPACT

the signators declared their belief in his innocence of the murder, as well as their conviction that the Queen should re-marry, and that the most desirable husband was Bothwell. At his instigation they pledged themselves to advance his interests and bring about the union at any cost, and to regard his enemies as their own ; and they undertook to risk life itself. One alone refused to sign the bond, and that was the Earl of Eglinton, who withdrew unseen while his companions were recording their names. The Archbishop of St. Andrew's, four Bishops and sixteen Lords were Bothwell's bondsmen.

One more desperate measure was needed to crown an act which has no parallel even

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

in the stormy times of Scotland's most tempestuous period. Triumphant on every hand, master of the realm in deed if not in name, feared by those who did not hate him, untrammelled by any sense of honour, uninfluenced by pity and unaffected by shame, Bothwell did not hesitate to take his final step. He knew that he was pitted against a woman whose courage was equal to his own, whose genius and daring were as great, and one who in title at least was still his Queen and his superior. He knew it was more than possible, on hearing of the infamous barter of herself, that her pride would make her spurn his suit, however much in secret she might have favoured it. Bothwell therefore cast aside all remnants of

PLATE 12

CRAIGMILLAR CASTLE

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

THREE MILES SOUTH OF EDINBURGH, ON A HILL THREE HUNDRED FEET HIGH. THE CASTLE, NOW IN RUINS, DATES FROM THE XV. CENTURY. MARY SO OFTEN LIVED HERE THAT THE NEIGHBOURING VILLAGE, IN WHICH HER FRENCH GUARDS LIVED, WAS KNOWN AS LITTLE FRANCE.



THE ABDUCTION

caution and decency, and set himself to compromise the sovereign so hopelessly that in very self-protection she would be compelled to marry him. He aimed at nothing less than abduction, and carried out his purpose absolutely.

Four days after the signing of the bond Mary was to return from Stirling. Bothwell, with well-mounted men a thousand strong, left Edinburgh on the pretence of crushing a Border riot ; but he swiftly altered his course, and riding hard to Linlithgow, he intercepted the Queen and her small train about a mile from the town. Bothwell seized her horse's bridle, and turning off the Edinburgh Road hurried with his captive to Dunbar Castle, a stronghold of which Mary

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

had made him governor. The Earl of Huntly, one of the bondsmen, was with the Queen, as well as Maitland and Sir James Melville. No resistance was possible, none was offered, and Bothwell, unmolested, took his abducted bride to Dunbar, and for ten days kept her a prisoner, refusing to allow even her own servants to see her.

What passed during that time of detention must be matter of conjecture ; but it is clear that Mary's spirit was broken, and that she was once more overcome with shame and melancholy. One thing only remained to be done, and that was to consent to an early marriage. On May 3rd, 1567, her captor took her, closely guarded, to Edinburgh. She would have turned her horse to

HER MARRIAGE WITH BOTHWELL

Holyrood, but at the foot of the Canongate Bothwell took her bridle and led her up the High Street to the Castle, which was then under his control. The banns had been twice published before Bothwell allowed the Queen to leave the Castle. They were married in the council-chamber at Holyrood, by the Bishop of Orkney, only a few weeks after Darnley's death. On the day of her wedding Mary weepingly declared that she was too sad to rejoice, and wished for nothing but death. For three weeks she remained at Holyrood, then Bothwell took her, disguised as a page, to Borthwick Castle, eight miles south of Edinburgh.

So far Bothwell had conquered all. He had divorced his own wife and killed Darnley,

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

and thus removed the chief barriers between himself and marriage with Mary ; and he was actually sharing in the royal government of Scotland. But his action had caused horror even in a country inured to shocks, and there was a sudden and almost general rising against him and Mary. Bothwell could not face the storm, and he fled, leaving Mary to take her chances with the furious nobles who had surrounded the Castle.

Braver than her husband had proved, Mary hurled their own insults back upon them, and they sullenly withdrew towards Edinburgh. That night the Queen, disguised as a man, rode after Bothwell, joined him, and went back to Dunbar. There she dressed like a woman of Edinburgh, in a red petticoat

PLATE 13

SAINT ANDREW'S

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

MARY'S FAVOURITE CITY OF REFUGE, IN FIFE,
FORTY-FIVE MILES FROM EDINBURGH. IT WAS
MADE A ROYAL BOROUGH IN 1140. MARY LODGED
IN A MERCHANT'S HOUSE, FREE FROM RESTRAINT
AND CEREMONY. "LIKE A BOURGEOISE WIFE" SAID
SHE, "I LIVE THERE WITH MY LITTLE TROOP."



BOTHWELL AND LINDSAY

and other garments, including a velvet hat and a muffler. It speaks for the splendour of her height that the petticoat only reached to her knees. On Sunday, June 15th, she met the lords on Carberry Hill, in this costume, and then there was a dramatic development in the proposal that Bothwell and the grim Lord Lindsay should fight a single combat. Lindsay, "a man of the old world, rough and honest, though untaught," "a rude warrior, negligent of his exterior even to misanthropical sullenness," was more than a match for Bothwell, and Mary in her heart of hearts knew it. Woman that she was, she shrank from the possibility of death to Bothwell, and asserting that the fault was more hers than his, she surrendered, still hoping

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

and believing that she would save his life and her own crown. But there and then she recognised that all was over.

Bothwell had shirked the challenge to single combat, and with a panic-stricken word of farewell to the woman who had risked all and lost so much for his sake, he surrounded himself with thirty spearmen and rode away, leaving her to brave her fate alone. She saw him run from the field and disappear, and then she knew that to his many other failings he had added that which to her high spirit was the bitterest of all—arrant cowardice. Bothwell made his ignominious exit from the field of battle, too contemptible even to be pursued.

Mary was the butt for gibes and insults

MARY A PRISONER

from the soldiers which stung her into swearing that she would hang or crucify them all. Her bitterest wrath was levelled at Lindsay, and she vowed that for what he had done she would have his head. They hurried her at nightfall to the provost's house, through crowded streets where not a sound was made, her face thick with summer dust and her eyes blinded by tears. Already the people who had idolised her were clamouring for her life. They thronged the streets, and before the very window of the room in which she lodged for safety they flaunted a flag on which was a demand for the vengeance of God upon the murderers of Darnley. It seemed as if there was no friend left to aid her. She distractedly appealed to passers-by

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

for help and rescue ; but in those first hours of peril no one dared to answer her despairing cries. Maitland was walking beneath her window. She beseeched him to go to her—and for answer he pulled his hat over his face and hurried off.

True lover, Mary clung at this great crisis to the traitor who was flying from her, seeking only his personal salvation. Again she declared that she would never abandon or forget Bothwell, and that she would be content to be put on board a ship with him and drift where wind and tide should carry them. Such at any rate was one of the stories which her enemies told concerning her, and the hatred of the people on hearing it was still more inflamed against her. They forgot

DUNBAR CASTLE

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

A VERY ANCIENT STRUCTURE ON THE COAST, MIDWAY BETWEEN EDINBURGH AND BERWICK. AFTER THE MURDER OF RIZZIO, MARY FLED FOR SHELTER TO DUNBAR; AND SHE FOUND REFUGE HERE A SECOND TIME WHEN, DISGUISED AS A PAGE, SHE ESCAPED FROM BORTHWICK CASTLE. DUNBAR WAS DISMANTLED BY MARY'S HALF-BROTHER, THE REGENT MURRAY.



AT LOCHLEVEN CASTLE

her beauty and afflictions, and remembered only her faults and weaknesses—above all, her complicity in Darnley's murder. It was impossible to stem the torrent of their fury, or to check their savage cries of "Kill her!" "Burn her!" "Drown her!" Such few followers as she had, those who still protected her, resolved upon the daring measure of smuggling her out of the city, and on the night of June 16 they secretly conveyed her to Lochleven Castle.

This famous Castle was an island fortress, a grim old tower rising from the water, surrounded by a courtyard. Two round flanking towers were at the angles, and there were other buildings of lesser importance. To be a captive in such a dismal dungeon was hard

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

enough for the proud high-spirited Queen to bear ; the imprisonment was made infinitely more galling because her chief gaoler was the Lady of Lochleven, mother of the Regent Murray, by her illicit intercourse with Mary's own father. She hated Mary as the legitimate holder of power and sovereignty which might so easily have belonged to her son, if James had dealt justly by her ; and to this personal feeling there was added the intensity of religious feeling, for the Lady of Lochleven was a Protestant, and preferred a pagan to a Catholic. So great a change had come upon the country that there were those who were ready to accuse Mary herself of the murder of Darnley, while others went to the extremity of urging her immediate execution.

AT LOCHLEVEN CASTLE

At Lochleven Mary was given the choice of a divorce from Bothwell, a trial, or an abdication. A trial she dreaded above all things, because the famous Casket Letters had fallen into the hands of her enemies, and she was warned that these documents, incriminating Bothwell and showing her own knowledge of, if not complicity in, Darnley's murder, would be produced in evidence against her. Forged or genuine, the Casket Letters have become an inseparable part of Mary's story.

The ruthless Lindsay was the central figure in that forced renunciation of the Scottish crown. Those who sent him gave him instructions which even to his rough uncultured mind presented no obstacles. He

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

was ordered to see that Mary abdicated, and to use foul means if fair were not successful. And in his efforts he was to have the full support of Ruthven, son and successor of the brutal noble who had led the Rizzio murderers. While this party went armed with menaces another was to try persuasion. This was led by Sir Robert Melville, Master of the Household, who in his scabbard carried letters from friends urging Mary to agree to the inevitable. Distracted by these two forces she yielded, and on July 24th, 1567, signed the deed which made her infant son the King and a second by which Murray became Regent. But she had not obeyed until force had been used and tears and arguments employed in vain. Lindsay, overcome by

PLATE 15

THE ABDICATION AT LOCH-
LEVEN CASTLE OF MARY
STUART, QUEEN OF SCOTS

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

THE TROUBLES THAT FOLLOWED MARY'S MARRIAGE WITH BOTHWELL, CULMINATED IN BOTHWELL'S FLIGHT TO DENMARK AND THE QUEEN'S IMPRISONMENT IN LOCHLEVEN CASTLE, WHERE SHE FELL UNDER THE TORTURING MALICE OF LADY MURRAY, THE REGENT'S MOTHER, WHO HAD BEEN THE MISTRESS OF JAMES V. ON JULY 24TH, 1567, MARY WAS FORCED TO ABDICATE THE CROWN AND TO APPOINT MURRAY REGENT FOR HER LITTLE SON, THE CHILD-KING JAMES VI.



MARY AND BOTHWELL

passion through her unwillingness, seized her so roughly in ordering her to sign that the dark marks of his gauntlet were visible when Mary turned up her sleeve and bared her arm.

The relationship between Mary and Bothwell, which must be considered briefly, has been the theme of countless controversies. Her own actions and utterances are contradictory, for while she vowed so miserably that she wished for death, she had already done everything within her power to compromise herself with him. Her love letters to Bothwell testify to this. When Bothwell fled from Edinburgh Castle he left a small gilt coffer, not quite a foot long, containing a large number of letters written by Mary to

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

him both before and after their marriage. They are full of expressions of passionate regard for Bothwell, and a wish to see and be with him. She wrote as a lover to him even while her husband lived and Bothwell's wife was still unvictimised by a cruel divorce.

"I think not," she said, "my heart and person a sufficient reward for the merits of my Bothwell, and long for the happy hour when I may give a kingdom in dowry with my love ; till then I cannot say my joy is complete, nor will I ever rest till this, the supremest desire my soul can know, is accomplished."

"If not decreed for Bothwell, I will be for no other," she wrote at another time, and again, after the abduction, when there was

MARY AND BOTHWELL

reason for supposing that he alone was the wrongdoer and betrayer :—

“How shall I so greatly dissemble? How appear at the head of an army, animating them to pursue to death the man I love far more than life! Assist me, all the artifices of my sex!”

She justified herself at every turn. “I never loved this Darnley,” she declared to Bothwell, “and his ingratitude has made me to hate him. Yet could I with pleasure part with some of my blood to ransom him, were there a possibility of avoiding it (the murder). By Darnley’s death I am indeed once more a queen. I am a queen, but you are not a king.” “France, Spain, England and Rome were providing me husbands; Murray was depriving me of

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

everything but the name of Queen! How but by marriage could I put a stop to the solicitations of the one side, or have curbed the insolence of the other?"

"It is not Bothwell, a man whose freedom with me love could alone authorise, but my intended husband and future king, that I shall now embrace. Haste then to the arms, though ever present to the heart of M.R."

Such were some of her rapturous epistles to Bothwell, yet he of all men was the one to leave her at the crisis of her troubles, and to spend his energy in securing his own salvation. He disappeared, and his stormy life was crowned by madness and death in foreign captivity. Getting together a pirate fleet, he was pursued across the North Sea, and

PLATE 16

HERMITAGE CASTLE

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

THE CHIEF STRONGHOLD OF THE INFAMOUS BOTHWELL. IT IS SITUATED ON THE BORDER, IN LIDDESDALE, AND IS STILL IN A STATE OF GOOD PRESERVATION. BOTHWELL AT ONE TIME, AFTER A STUBBORN BORDER FIGHT, WAS TAKEN BACK TO THE CASTLE DANGEROUSLY WOUNDED.



CURTAILED GRANDEUR

captured by the King of Denmark. He was held a prisoner, was divorced from Mary by the Pope, and, having lost his reason, he gradually died. It is supposed that he was buried in Faareveille Church, where his mummy is still to be seen.

The Queen's imprisonment at Lochleven had prepared her for the curtailment of that liberty and grandeur with which she was to be so closely connected for the rest of her life. Her dwelling as a captive was in the second story of the Castle, and consisted of three small rooms opening into each other. Her retinue had been reduced to two women and a boy—an abridgement which was a bitter blow to Mary's proud spirit.

But one at least of her women was equal

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

to a little host of lesser souls. This was Mary Seton, "that riddle of womankind," whose beauty and courage would have made her unrivalled but for the inevitable comparison with her royal mistress. She was the spirited daughter of the fifth Lord Seton, Grand Master of Mary's household, who from first to last was inflexibly loyal to his unhappy sovereign, and refused all offers of advancement from her. He was forced to fly abroad after the battle of Langside, and to endure such straits that he drove a wagon in Flanders for a living. Later, in more peaceful times, he returned and rose to favour in the reign of Mary's son. Mary Seton accompanied her royal mistress into captivity, sharing her hardships until her health gave way ; then

MARY SETON

she sought refuge in the Convent at Rheims, over which the Queen's aunt presided. So late as 1613, while still a nun in that ancient city, an annuity was solicited for her, on the ground that from infancy to the last she had served the King's mother, and was now "old and decrepid, and depends on the charity of the Duke of Guise's sister."

It was Mary's nature to plot and scheme and to use at all times those artifices of her sex of which she wrote to Bothwell. Never had she greater need of them than now, when, if she was to make a last attempt to save her throne, she must have her liberty. The very thought of escape from her grim environment could not be anything more than a forlorn hope. Slender though the

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

prospect was Mary was not discouraged. While outwardly cheerful and resigned, she was incessantly watchful and calculating.

There was in the vicinity at this time a handsome, impressionable and ambitious young man named George Douglas, brother of the Lord of Lochleven. His aim was high—nothing less than the reward of Mary's hand when she was freed from Bothwell. The lord of the castle learned his purpose and his hope, and turned him out of the place. But the daring aspirant had been overpowered by Mary's charms, and though he fled from the island, Douglas remained in the neighbourhood and corresponded with the romantic prisoner in her fortress. True or untrue, the statement was made by Drury,

PLATE 17

L O R D L I N D S A Y

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

A RUDE WARRIOR, VIGOROUS AND RUTHLESS, LORD
LINDSAY WAS THE CENTRAL FIGURE IN MARY'S
FORCED RENUNCIATION OF THE SCOTTISH CROWN.



A BOLD ATTEMPT

the English Ambassador, that Mary actually proposed a marriage with Douglas if she succeeded in escaping. Douglas's hopes, and with them Mary's, were crushed for the time ; but the captive audaciously broke prison. It was her habit to lie in bed late—there was no reason for early rising, since time passed heavily in those dull days of inactivity—and to receive her laundress there.

One morning the laundress, carefully prepared for such an enterprise, swiftly exchanged garments with the Queen, and Mary left the Castle in this disguise. She was well enough concealed to enter the boat which had brought the woman from the mainland and to be rowed off from the fortress. But the rowers knew that whoever the occupant

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

might be it was not the laundress, and in a jesting spirit one of them tried to pull away the muffler with which Mary's features were concealed. She put up her hands to keep the covering in its place, and the simple act revealed her. They saw that the hands were white and beautiful, and knew her to be the captive Queen. They began to row back again, and once more the superb spirit of the unconquerable woman asserted itself. She commanded them, on pain of death, to take her to the mainland. They refused, fearing their lord more than their sovereign; she cajoled, they resisted; then she threatened, and they laughed at the fury of a mere prisoner. Baffled, they insisted upon retaking her to the fortress, but Mary had so

HER ESCAPE FROM LOCHLEVEN

enmeshed even these rude boatmen that they promised to land her secretly, so that the lord of the Castle should not know of her attempt. With this she had to be content.

Mary returned to her captivity, watchful still, and intrepidly hopeful. Her chance came again, once more in the person of a susceptible admirer. This time it was a mere lad of eighteen, another Douglas, by name William. While the Lord of Lochleven was at supper, the youth stealthily stole the keys from the table on which they were lying, unlocked the doors of the Queen's rooms, let Mary and Mary Seton out of the fortress, and embarking with them in a boat he rowed them to the mainland. He was as cautious as he was brave, for to check pursuit he had locked the

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

ponderous gate of the castle and thrown the keys into the lake. Almost as the keys splashed into the dark water, there were flashes from the small pieces of artillery in the battlements, and the deep reverberation of the weapons in the neighbouring hills told the story of the daring prison-breaking. The alarm was given too late, and before the gates of Lochleven could be opened and pursuit begun Mary was free. Her escape was a triumphant success, and she joined George Douglas, Lord Seton, and other faithful followers on the mainland. They fled at once to Niddry Castle, and hurried thence to Hamilton.

Resolute to strike a blow for the throne she had been forced to relinquish, but of

PLATE 18

LOCHLEVEN CASTLE

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

THE RUINS OF LOCHLEVEN CASTLE, A FOURTEENTH CENTURY STRONGHOLD, ARE ON AN ISLAND ON THE KINROSS SIDE, ABOUT HALF A MILE FROM THE SHORE. THE CASTLE IS FAMOUS AS MARY'S FIRST PRISON, AND HER DARING AND DRAMATIC ESCAPE IN THE YEAR 1568.



HER ARMY ROUTED

whose recovery she did not despair, she made ready to battle for its restoration. She still had faithful nobles and those lesser gentry and clansmen who upheld the Stuart cause and the Catholic faith. It was May 2nd, 1568, when she escaped from Lochleven, and early next morning when Hamilton Palace gave her temporary refuge. By the 13th six thousand men had gathered to her standard at Langside, near Glasgow. The Queen's and the Regent's forces—Murray had returned to Scotland—came into conflict, but from Cathcart Castle Mary saw her army quickly routed.

Once more she fled. At first she tried to reach Dumbarton, but Lord Herries implored her to escape from the country. She altered

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

her course, and riding hard, never stopped until she arrived at Sanquhar. Finally Mary reached Dundrennan Abbey, almost on the shore of the Solway, and her last sad night on Scottish soil was spent in that stately building which is now a ruin. On the 16th, crossing the Solway Firth in a fishing boat, she landed at Workington, in Cumberland. By that act she bade farewell to Scotland and put herself into the realm and actual power of that other monarch of whom she had written : "I am for ever doomed to be the vassal of the English Queen, the tool of her cursed policy, the property of her ambition, without a friend to aid me."

Yet it was to the English Queen that the hunted fugitive wrote for mercy almost as

APPEAL TO ELIZABETH

soon as she reached English soil. She was then a prisoner in the castle at Carlisle, to which city she had been removed from Workington. Broken and crushed by her misfortunes, Mary sank her enmity to Elizabeth and appealed to her compassion. "I am in piteous case," she said, "not only for a queen but for a gentlewoman. I have nothing in the world but what I stand upright in, having escaped by riding sixty miles the first day across country, and having dared only to travel at night since then." Elizabeth wavered for a moment, but fear of Mary and concern for her own safety prevailed, and guided by these considerations and the counsels of her advisers, who saw in the fugitive sovereign, now actually in

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

England, a greater danger than ever, she relented only so far as to command that Mary should be treated with respect. As to freedom, she would not think of it, and directed that the captive should be kept in such safe custody that she could not escape. Mary begged for a personal interview, which Elizabeth refused to grant so long as she rested under the imputation of complicity in Darnley's murder. From Carlisle Castle she was transferred to Bolton, in the North Riding of the beautiful county of Yorkshire, not far from Richmond, and in the quietness of that retreat the turmoil raged afresh. The murder was to be inquired into, and Mary was led to hope that the investigation, which was held at York, would be favourable to

PLATE 19

EDINBURGH CASTLE
FROM THE GRASS MARKET

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

THE CASTLE IS THE OLDEST PART OF THE ANCIENT CITY OF EDINBURGH. IT IS BUILT ON A STEEP ROCK NEARLY 400 FEET ABOVE THE SEA-LEVEL, IN A SMALL ROOM ON THE GROUND FLOOR MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS GAVE BIRTH IN 1566 TO JAMES VI., IN WHOM THE ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH CROWNS WERE UNITED IN 1603.



ELIZABETH'S REFUSAL

her. The Duke of Norfolk, president of the conference and head of the Catholics in England, cherished the ambition of marriage with her. The conference ended indifferently. Another was held at Westminster in October, and at its close Elizabeth declared that she could not admit Mary to her presence without manifest blemish of her own honour. Again it was proposed that Mary should entirely abdicate, but she answered that she would rather die than remit her crown, and that the last word she uttered on earth would be those of a queen of Scotland. Murray had been concerned in both conferences, fortifying his regency by using the fatal evidence of the Casket Letters ; and the net result of all these

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

inquiries was that Mary remained a prisoner for life. The conferences at York and Westminster, after wearisome inquiry, had come to no more definite finding than that nothing had been proved against either party. Elizabeth's duty was clear—to discharge her prisoner ; but she refused to let Mary go, and took more stringent measures than ever to prevent her from escaping.

Soon after this Mary was removed to Tutbury, where she was in charge of the Earl of Shrewsbury, thence she went to Wingfield, where the scheme of marrying Norfolk came up afresh and was almost certain of accomplishment, provided the divorce from Bothwell could be effected—and that was not likely to prove a hard matter.

MURRAY ASSASSINATED

Now came the beginning of numberless schemes for Mary's escape and triumph. Norfolk, pusillanimous and wavering, was concerned with others in a plot for a Catholic rising, and was seized and taken to the Tower. Mary was removed again to Tutbury, thence to Coventry, and so grave and pressing was the national danger that orders were given that if she tried to escape she was to be put to death. Murray, as if to add to the tragedy of the great drama, was assassinated early in the new year of 1569, and his death aroused Mary's wildest hopes, especially as the Norfolk marriage was proposed again. In May, 1570, she was removed to Chatsworth; but after spending the summer there she was transferred to the Earl of

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Shrewsbury's home at Sheffield. Norfolk's feeble scheming ended in his execution in June, 1572, and Mary's chances of success were crushed.

For ten years Mary, a hopeless captive, was associated with daring plans for overthrowing Elizabeth and re-establishing her own position. Trapped and trammelled though she was, she never discontinued hoping and intriguing. It was her fate, too, that she should never cease to be the victim of such calumnies as she herself had published concerning her enemies. She heard of allegations of her misconduct with Shrewsbury, made by the countess, and as a result she was taken from Sheffield to the stately manor-house of Wingfield, on the crest of

PLATE 20

DUNBLANE CATHEDRAL

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

THE CATHEDRAL AT DUNBLANE IS ON THE BANKS OF THE RIVER ALLAN, AND IS THE BURIAL PLACE OF THE THREE LADIES DRUMMOND, WHO, TRADITION SAYS, WERE POISONED TO ENSURE THE DEATH OF ONE OF THEM WHO WAS THE MISTRESS OF JAMES THE FOURTH. FROM DUNBLANE BISHOP CHISHOLM TOOK TO EDINBURGH THE POPE'S DISPENSATION FOR THE MARRIAGE OF MARY WITH DARNLEY.



SCANDALS

a Derbyshire hill. The accusations were admitted to be untrue by the peeress who had made them, and the harassed life that Shrewsbury had led moved him to offer sincere thanks to Elizabeth for freeing him from his wife and Mary.

Scandal begot scandal, and even the love letters to Bothwell were eclipsed by that malignant effusion from the prisoner to her enemy and oppressor which detailed the slanders of the countess. It was a virulent assault on Elizabeth's private character which has no parallel even in the war of words between the two crowned heads, and it can be justified only on the ground that Mary had been so long a prisoner and had so completely abandoned hope of freedom that she

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

was temporarily mad with grief and disappointment. She accused Elizabeth of misconduct with men of varying ranks, but appealed to God to witness that she set down "very sincerely and without any passion" only the truth as the countess had told it to her; and she hurled bitter gibes at Elizabeth's vanity, while professing merely to repeat what the countess had said.

The countess, she wrote, advised her, "While she laughed extremely, to enter my son in the lists for making love to you . . . and on my replying that this would be taken for an absolute mockery, she answered me, that you was as vain, and had as good an opinion of your beauty, as if you were some goddess of the sky; that she would take it

A BITTER LETTER

upon her life, she could easily make you believe it, and you would receive my son in this light." And generally that Elizabeth's vanity was so vast and her receptivity of praise so great, that ladies of the Court, whilst they were flattering her, dare not look each other in the face, for fear of laughing at the "flams" they were putting on her.

It is said that Elizabeth never received this letter, but that it was intercepted by Burghley. Even so, Elizabeth had learnt enough by this time to confirm her resolve that Mary should never be released while she had power to keep her captive. The prisoner was more harshly treated than ever, and as a crown to her sufferings she was taken once more to Tutbury Castle, where in addition

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

to enduring cold and discomfort she suffered the indignity of a still further reduced retinue. More than that, she was in the care of Sir Amyas Paulet, a hard, glum man from whom she got little sympathy. She endured nearly a year's confinement, then a fresh prison was found for her at Chartley, near Stafford.

Mary herself has given details of the circumstances of her dismal imprisonment at Tutbury, which of all her gaols was infinitely the worst. Two mean rooms were her only lodging. They were built of wood, and "full of holes," tumbling down on all sides, and having "no shelter whatever to walk in or retire to." She was in a walled enclosure, on the top of a hill, exposed to all the winds and inclemencies of heaven. "In short, the

PLATE 21

DUNDRENNAN ABBEY

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

FOUNDED IN 1142, DUNDRENNAN ABBEY IS NEAR THE SOLWAY FIRTH, SIX MILES SOUTH-EAST OF KIRKCUDBRIGHT. MARY SPENT HER LAST NIGHT HERE BEFORE SHE FLED TO ENGLAND ACROSS THE FIRTH, TO ENCOUNTER WORSE SORROWS.



SEVERE PRIVATIONS

greater part of it is rather a dungeon for base and abject criminals than a habitation fit for a person of my quality or even of a much lower." The rooms were so excessively cold, especially at night, that it was impossible to keep warm or free from illness. Then again, the house having no drains, subjected her to a "perfume not the most agreeable." Her health suffered seriously because of her privations, and Tutbury also filled her with depression by reason of its gloom and associations. A priest who had been harassed and persecuted to distraction hanged himself in front of her window, and a man was drowned by falling into the well. Mary implored that she should receive better treatment and accommodation; but little was

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

done for her comfort, although a contemporary State Paper enumerates articles to be conveyed to Tutbury for Mary's use, amongst them being hangings for her chamber, three or four hundredweight of feathers, "to amend old and thin beds and bolsters," certain pieces of plate, Turkey carpets, and window curtains.

Elizabeth was unmoved by all appeals, and while frequently professing sympathy for the victim's miseries, disclaimed responsibility for her detention. The English Queen watched ceaselessly for some opportunity of entangling the captive in a net from which even she with all her resource and craft could not escape. It came at last in Mary's implication in Anthony Babington's plot to kill Elizabeth,

FOTHERINGAY CASTLE

an association which was fully proved by the seizure of her correspondence.

Then the last blow fell. Mary had afforded evidence against herself which was enough for the infliction of any punishment, even death itself; and at Tixall Park, where she had been allowed to join a hunting party, she was arrested. Her papers were searched at Chartley, and on the strength of their incriminating testimony she was removed to Fotheringay Castle in Northamptonshire, a dozen miles from which, across the flat and pleasant country, the cathedral of Peterborough rises. Fotheringay was a place of unhappy and unhallowed memory—"a heritage of misery and blood." Richard III. was born in Fotheringay Castle, and his widowed

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

mother was living there when he became the murderer of her little grandsons, Edward V. and his brother, whose ashes are buried at the foot of Elizabeth's tomb. Elizabeth knew the building personally, for she had visited it in 1573, to superintend the erection of monuments in the church to the memory of the murdered children ; and she knew that such a prison, with a gaoler like Paulet, would make Mary's escape almost impossible. It is believed that Elizabeth occupied the very rooms which were afterwards assigned to Mary.

From prison to prison for nineteen years Mary had been taken at the instigation of her ruthless rival. When she left Chartley for Fotheringay Castle, Paulet's residence, she

BOLTON CASTLE

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

A MASSIVE FEUDAL CASTLE IN THE NORTH RIDING OF YORKSHIRE TO WHICH, IN 1568, MARY WAS REMOVED FROM CARLISLE. IT IS SAID THAT SHE MADE A DARING ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE BY BEING LET DOWN FROM THE ONLY WINDOW WHICH OVERLOOKED THE COUNTRY. BUT MARY WAS RECAPTURED EASILY BY HER GUARDS.



MARY'S COURAGE

knew that already, if not actually condemned, she was doomed, and that her stormy life was ebbing swiftly to its close. The long years of confinement had told upon her body, and the tall proud carriage was now somewhat bent and worn ; the lovely face bore signs of ceaseless suffering, and the dark hair was turning grey. Yet one thing in the Queen defied the ravages of time, and that was her spirit. Unconquered she became a captive—two decades had not crushed her, and even now, at the very last, she was able to look into the dark future with a resolute heart. If Elizabeth was incurably hostile, if her oppression never ceased and her toils remorselessly strengthened, Mary also never deviated from her position. She met insult with insult and

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

pride with a more stubborn pride. What she asked for she demanded as a right and not as a concession, and to the end she scorned to beg for the life which she refused to acknowledge as being under her sovereign kinswoman's control. They had fought a long hard fight, and Mary recognized that she was vanquished by her whom she had called "that assuming arbitress of my fate." The English Queen had overcome her.

Meanwhile Mary, who rejoiced at the removal of Murray, and approved of the method of it, obtained a Bull from the Pope, dissolving her marriage with Bothwell. This left her free to continue her efforts to secure another alliance. Desperate and full of hatred of her oppressors, she intrigued with the Pope

AMBITIOUS SCHEMES

and the King of Spain to bring about the conquest of England and with it Elizabeth's downfall and her own colossal triumph. Full of hope, she personally superintended the details of an invasion by her kinsman the Duke of Guise; but these vast plans were not to be accomplished so that she might witness their fulfilment.

It was September, 1586, when Mary entered Fotheringay. On October 11th she knew how desperate her fight for life itself would be, for Commissioners had been appointed to try her, and had already reached the castle. She fought even them, though they included the keenest and most subtle lawyers of the land, among them the Lord Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor. "Alas!

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

How many counsellors, and not one for me!" she sighed, when she knew of the formidable array against her.

"I am no subject of Elizabeth's," she vowed, "and would rather die a thousand deaths than by such an acknowledgment wrong the sublimity of royal majesty." She refused to yield till the 14th, then she gave way so far as to volunteer to be present at her trial in the great hall.

At this trial Mary wore a black gown covered with a white veil of lawn. She was now "a very tall and big woman, being lame," and was supported by Andrew Melville, brother of the knight who had been master of her household, and Burgoyne, her physician. One of her women carried her train, and

PLATE 23

TUTBURY CASTLE

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

THE RUINS OF THIS ROYAL FORTRESS ARE SITUATED ON A LOFTY ROCK ON THE SOUTH BANK OF THE DOVE, WHICH SEPARATES DERBYSHIRE AND STAFFORDSHIRE. MARY WAS CLOSELY CONFINED IN THIS GLOOMY PRISON, WHERE NEGLECT AND UNKINDNESS DESTROYED HER HEALTH, AFFLICTING HER WITH MUCH SICKNESS.



THE HALL OF TRIAL

three other women attended her. In the public collection of historical autographs and papers at the British Museum there is a rough sketch by Lord Burghley, one of the Commissioners at Fotheringay, showing the arrangement of the hall for the trial. According to this crude plan, the “chayre for y^e Q. of Scotts” was semicircular, and was placed in the centre of the hall, just above a dividing rail.

The charge against Mary was that she had not only conspired to kill Elizabeth, but had herself sought to compass the sovereign’s death. In that great struggle she fought alone, pitted against the adversaries who had everything in their favour and knew already what the issue of the trial must be.

The Court adjourned until October 25th.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Then the Commissioners met in the Star Chamber at Westminster, and in that apartment of infamous memory they passed sentence of death upon her—and by this time she was a bed-ridden invalid. Parliament approved, and on December 4th Mary heard her doom, and heard it so undismayed that she thanked God that at last her long captivity was nearly ended. She wrote to Elizabeth on the 17th a letter which made that inflexible monarch burst into tears. But she did not beg for life; she desired with queenly dignity that certain honours should be paid to her while still alive, and as much so when dead. She added, “While abandoning this world, and preparing myself for a better, I must remind you that one day you will have to

HOPE ABANDONED

answer for your charge, and for all those whom you doom, and that I desire that my blood and my country may be remembered in that time.”

Mary abandoned hope of pardon or relief, and penned the piteous if not profound lines :

Alas! what am I? and in what estate?
A wretched corse bereaved of all its heart;
An empty shadow, lost, unfortunate—
To die is now in life my only part!

There were strange wild rumours that Mary had escaped from Fotheringay, and even in London a goldsmith's boy alleged that the Queen had broken prison, but had been recaptured, having fractured one of her arms in her attempt at freedom. The sympathy of the public was with her, and it was

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generally believed that she would not be put to death. Strong measures were taken to prevent the spread of false news concerning the captive's escape.

Elizabeth shuffled with the death warrant, hoping either that Mary would commit suicide or that she would be destroyed by zealous partisans. But Mary above all things dreaded a secret death, which would leave her without witnesses that up to the very last she was a true Catholic; and even Elizabeth's followers shrank from a crime which might bring upon them the fury of their capricious mistress. At last she took the great resolve, and from her "Manor of Greenwich" signed the warrant on Wednesday, February 1st, 1587, which was the

THE SCAFFOLD

twenty-ninth year of her reign. On the following Wednesday Mary was beheaded.

That tragic termination to her martyrdom came in the great hall, in the middle of which a scaffold had been made. This was a simple wooden structure twelve feet square, and only two feet high, reached by two steps from the floor. The scaffold was surrounded by a very low rail. There was a stool for Mary and a pillow for her to kneel upon. In the centre was the block, and near it were two chairs. It was a morning in the depth of winter, and the great, gloomy apartment was made more sombre by the black cotton with which the scaffold and everything associated with it were covered. But such a colour could have little or no

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

depressing effect on Mary. She knew it too well, and had made too close an acquaintance with it, inasmuch as during the last two months of her imprisonment her chamber and her bed were hung with black. No gleam of colour brightened that chamber of death, and the very flames of the fire which roared up the chimney, against which the scaffold stood, found no reflection in the sable furnishings. This, the place in which Mary was to meet her doom, had been specially named by Elizabeth, who dreaded a public execution, outside the Castle, fearing a rising by those friends of Mary's who, with all her faults, loved her so well.

Already, on the Sunday night, the executioner and his "instrument" had arrived.

HER DOOM ANNOUNCED

He was Bull, the Hangman of London, and had agreed to do his work for £10, an amount which in those days represented a much greater sum than it would to-day. Bull had been despatched secretly, travelling as a serving man, with his axe in a trunk ; and he was hidden in an inn at Fotheringay until the day of execution.

When the announcement of her certain doom was made to Mary she was ill in bed ; but she rose courageously and seated herself in a chair at the foot of it. There the Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury, with others, assembled and, uncovered, told the Queen that she must prepare to undergo her punishment. This was on Tuesday, the 7th, and she was to die the next morning.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Elizabeth had delayed as long as she could, they said, being unwilling to take her life ; but she could wait no longer, for she was pressed on all sides to fulfil the finding of the Court.

The death-warrant was read. "I am no good and no use to anyone!" exclaimed Mary despairingly. "I have long looked for this, and I have expected it day by day for eighteen years. I have been held a prisoner without having merited it, for I came into this country of my own free will in hope of succour, according to the promise of the Queen." She reiterated her assertion that she had never desired the death of Elizabeth or anybody else, and this she swore on a copy of the English New Testament. Even then,

A LAST REQUEST

the Earl of Kent objected that the oath was valueless, because the Testament was a Catholic Bible, and the Pope's version. They carried this bigotry to the extremity of refusing Mary's request to have her own priest to comfort her remaining hours, and tried to force upon her the attentions of the Dean of Peterborough, who was in the Castle. But on this point their royal captive was unyielding. Elizabeth herself had commanded that Mary should have no dealings with priestcraft, and her lords declared that it was their duty "to prevent such abominations, which offended God."

From the moment of the Commissioners' entry Mary was their property, to be held until they wanted her for execution. This,

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

they told her, was to be at eight o'clock next morning, and they declined to give a few hours longer so that she could put her affairs in order.

The long dark winter's night had some two hours to run before the dawn, when Mary called her attendants and told them that the end was very near—already six o'clock had struck. They assembled for the last toilet, which, woman to the end, she made with special care. She assumed a velvet petticoat of russet brown, with a black satin skirt and bodice ; these were partly hidden by a black satin mantle with a long train and falling sleeves, a stately garment which was edged with fur and gold-embroidered. White crape, with a long lace-edged veil of white

FINAL PRAYERS

crape also, was her headdress, and for ornaments she wore a chain of scented beads round her neck, with a cross depending from it, while at her waist she carried a golden rosary—emblems of the faith in which she died unflinchingly. Even as she was being dressed she gave her final orders and made her last wishes known, reading her simple will aloud and signing it, and charging that certain sums at her disposal should be distributed to her attendants and the poor. She comforted her weeping people and bade them farewell, embracing the women and allowing the men to kiss her hand. She passed from her chamber into a room which was used as an oratory, and there she knelt before the altar and prayed long and fervently. She was

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

faint with the strain upon her, and with a smile accepted a little bread and wine from her physician. Then she resumed her prayers.

A loud knocking was heard outside the locked door, and the tremulous voice of the Sheriff was heard announcing that the lords were waiting. For the moment there was no reply, and it was feared that Mary would resist, so greatly feared that the soldiers—there were two thousand in and about the castle—were ordered to break open the door. No such craven terror overpowered the woman who, though her life had been far from blameless, at least knew how to die.

Mary calmly continued her petitions, and at the second demand the door was opened and the Sheriff, white-wanded messenger,

PLATE 24

MARY SETON, COM-
PANION AND FRIEND
OF MARY STUART

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

QUEEN MARY'S FAVOURITE ATTENDANT. SHE
ACCOMPANIED HER ROYAL MISTRESS INTO
CAPTIVITY, AND SHOWED GREAT COURAGE AND
RESOURCE IN THE ESCAPE FROM LOCHLEVEN
CASTLE. SHE DIED IN THE CONVENT AT RHEIMS,
NEGLECTED OR ELSE FORGOTTEN BY MARY'S SON



PREPARED FOR DEATH

entered the room alone. Speech failed him as he came abruptly on that solemn scene of supplication, and some little time elapsed before he murmured that the lords had sent him. Still on her knees, the Queen replied that she was ready.

“Let us go,” she said, turning as Burgoyne gently helped her to rise and gave her an ivory crucifix from the altar, so that she might kiss it. Two gentlemen of Paulet’s guard came and did that which her own people could not fulfil and were not allowed to offer—help her to reach the execution platform.

At the very door of the oratory her attendants were ordered to remain behind, and so, at the last, she set forth alone to the scaffold. She descended the great staircase,

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

supported by her soldier-gaolers, as far as the landing, where Shrewsbury and Kent awaited her. For the first time in her life she was denied that attendance which had become part of her existence. She looked back, and observed that such neglect was not in keeping with her dignity as Queen. She begged that as a woman she might have women with her at the last.

“Suffer my poor servants to be present,” she pleaded, “that they may report how I died true to my religion.”

“Madam,” answered Kent, “that cannot well be granted, for it is feared that some of them would grieve your Grace and disquiet the company, and seek to wipe their napkins in your blood.”

TO THE SCAFFOLD

“My lord,” Mary assured him, with calm dignity, “I will give my word and promise that they shall not do any such thing.” Then she told the lords she knew that their commission was not so strict that they could not grant this request, even to a far meaner woman than she. They hesitated, whispered earnestly among themselves, and finally allowed her to have with her Melville, Burgoyne, and one or two other men, and the two women, Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle, who had been accustomed to attend in her chamber. The journey to the scaffold was resumed, Melville carrying her train, the soldiers supporting her and the Sheriff going before, with some three hundred lords and gentlemen making up the gloomy company.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

From the staircase Mary reached the entry, and thence she passed into the hall of execution. Undaunted, almost smiling, she walked to the black platform, ascended the steps, and took her seat upon the stool, with Kent and Shrewsbury—who was Earl Marshal—on the right, and the Sheriff to her left. Before her was the block, and by it the two masked men who were to carry out the judgment of death. Around the low rails the rest of the company was assembled.

Silence was commanded, in an atmosphere already oppressively still, while, as a matter of form, Elizabeth's death warrant was read by the Clerk of the Council, and was ended with a deeply breathed "God save the Queen." It seemed now as if the very end

FIRM TO THE END

had come, yet the Dean of Peterborough, carrying out his orders, and obeying the workings of his own strong Protestant convictions, earnestly implored Mary to employ her few remaining moments in making her peace with God. He uttered his words while standing without the rails, directly in front of her, almost at arm's length.

Unflinching still she told him what she had so often asserted, that she was settled in the Catholic faith—and that even then, on the very scaffold, she would shed her blood in defence of it.

The Dean implored again, but Mary remained unmoved; then the two earls joined in, and for the third time she refused.

“We will pray for your Grace ourselves,”

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

they said despairingly, and the Dean began afresh, but not before the unconquered woman had told them that they could pray, if they pleased, but she would not join in, and that no earthly power should move her from her own religion. Even as they prayed in English she told her beads and clasped her cross and raised her voice in the sonorous Latin supplications which she knew so well.

Tears streamed from the proud eyes as the solemn words came from the heart which even yet refused to quail, and Mary slipped from the stool and knelt as she raised her voice to heaven. At the finish of the Dean's prayers she repeated her own in English, for Christ, His Church, her son, Elizabeth, and an end of her troubles—beseeching that the

THE CROWNING SHAME

Queen might prosper and serve God aright. Again she vowed that she would shed her blood at the foot of the Cross of Christ, and clasped her crucifix and crossed herself anew.

“Madam,” said Kent sternly, “settle Christ Jesus in your heart, and leave those trumperies,” and with that the tragedy was almost done.

The headsmen knelt as Mary finished and begged her to forgive them, and she told them that she did so with all her heart. Then they made her last toilet, disrobing her, with the help of the two women. She put her crucifix upon the stool, from her neck they took the Agnus Dei, and removed her beads and her chain, and her apparel until nothing was left except her petticoat

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and kertel. Even these things were not done with any regard for the feelings of a fallen monarch who had already suffered and endured so much. No sooner was the crucifix upon the stool than the executioner seized it as his perquisite. Jane Kennedy struggled with the fellow, and so complete and unexpected was her onslaught that she snatched the symbol from his greedy grasp. Mary interfered to end the shameful scene. "Friend, let her have it," she said, "she will give you more than its value in money." The executioner obeyed, and this gold rosary and crucifix, the closest of all associations with Mary's last moments, was preserved and handed down to the present day. It is now in the possession of the Duke of Norfolk.

PLATE 25

THE EXECUTION OF
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,
FOTHERINGAY CASTLE,
FEBRUARY EIGHTH, 1587

PAINTED BY

SIR JAMES LINTON, R.I.

"INTO THY HANDS, O LORD! INTO THY HANDS!"



“INTO THY HANDS”

Throughout these preparations Mary's spirit remained unbroken, and hers was the voice that rose above all sobs and lamentations, full of encouragement and of hope for the world beyond the block. Still bidding them be of good cheer, she submitted while one of her women, Barbara Mowbray, who had kissed a Corpus Christi cloth, folded it and put it over the brave face and fastened it to the caul of the proud head. The women withdrew, weeping bitterly, and Mary knelt on the cushion in front of the block and recited her own death prayers in Latin, while a funeral march was played in the stifling stillness.

“Into Thy hands, O Lord !” she cried, as she groped in the gloom. She found her

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resting-place and put her shapely hands on the block to steady her head, but the assistant executioner drew them out of the axe's reach ; then he stooped and held her slightly with one hand ; and with her reiterated " Into Thy hands, O Lord !" the executioner dealt a blow when Shrewsbury raised his baton as the death-signal and turned his head aside. It was an unnerved aim, and struck the head instead of the neck, but scarcely a sound arose ; none came from Mary, nor did she so much as move. A second cut was made, and the head was severed, except for a sinew which was quickly parted with another blow.

That the execution was a ghastly bungle is clear from the statement of Jane Kennedy

A WITNESS' STORY

to James himself, not long after it was carried out. She saw him on her return from France and conferred with him for two hours in his cabinet. When she departed "he was very sad and pensive all that day, and would not sup that night." The next day she declared openly "how the Queen was martyred and mangled by the executioner, and set it out with such speeches and gestures as moved everybody to mislike greatly of it that heard it."

The streaming trophy of one woman's vengeance and another's martyrdom was held aloft, and the hushed and sickened company were called upon to pray that God would save Elizabeth. Many of the onlookers were weeping—amongst them Shrewsbury. Well indeed might the man who had been so long

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associated with the regal beauty give way before the cruel ignominy of her doom.

The awful tragedy was not yet ended. Throughout her life Mary had been known only as a young and lovely woman. On the scaffold itself the illusion had been maintained by using plaits of false hair and the headdress. Now that death had conquered artifice, and the executioner held up the tribute of his crimsoned axe, it was noticed that the hair, from which the lawn and plaits had fallen, was as grey as that of a woman of seventy, and that even while she awaited the stroke of the blade Mary's features had so vastly changed that few who knew her when alive could recognise her now. Yet she was less than forty-five years old.

HER FAITHFUL DOG

“So perish all the Queen’s enemies!” cried the Dean in a loud voice.

“Such be the end of all the Queen’s and the Gospel’s enemies!” declared the Earl of Kent, standing over the headless corpse.

The head was placed on a dish by the executioner and shown from one of the windows to a great crowd which had gathered in the courtyard; most of the dead Queen’s relics were burnt in the fire, and her own faithful little dog, which had hidden in her dress, terrified, came forth and dabbled in the warm blood. He was washed and taken away, and at four in the afternoon, when daylight was giving place to evening, they covered the body with cloth stripped from the billiard-table and bore it upstairs to a

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large room, where it was stripped, embalmed by surgeons, and wrapped in a wax winding-sheet and coffined, first in a lead shell, then in wood. Mary's attendants begged that they at least should spare it the dishonour of the executioner's handling; but they were thrust aside and ordered away, an act that crowned the shame which the haughty woman had endured on the scaffold.

Six months passed before Mary was removed from Fotheringay Castle for burial; then Elizabeth commanded that a royal funeral should be given. This took place on Sunday, July 30th. From the castle a stately torchlight procession started to Peterborough Cathedral, arriving after midnight. The Bishop, the Dean and others received the

BURIAL AT PETERBOROUGH

body at the door, and it was placed at once, without ceremony, in a vault in the south aisle, and bricked in except for a small opening. On the Tuesday morning the burial service was celebrated. Elizabeth, it was thought, would be present, but she sent as her representative the Countess of Bedford, who, attended by all the signs of sovereignty, saw the last rites performed in the black-lined cathedral. The sorry exhibition of pity and honour which came too late concluded at the Bishop's Palace, "where was prepared a most royal feast, and a dole given to the poor." Mary's attendants, with their wounds of grief reopened, were bidden to the banquet, but as during the service they had remained in the cloisters, so now they

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preferred a separate room—in which they sadly took their own food and drink.

Fotheringay Castle was demolished not long after Mary's death. It is said that James, on succeeding Elizabeth, ordered its destruction, but it was not for some years that the building disappeared so completely that it is recognisable to-day only by a shapeless mound. It is an extraordinary fact that the most rigid search for generations has failed to reveal a contemporary picture of any sort of the castle or any part of it, with, apparently, the sole exception of Burghley's rough plan of the great hall at the time of the trial. The hall became part of Connington Castle in Huntingdonshire ; other stones were employed in erecting a chapel in the

DISTANT VIEW OF PETER-
BOROUGH CATHEDRAL

PAINTED BY

JAMES ORROCK, R.I.

AFTER HER EXECUTION AT FOTHERINGAY
CASTLE, MARY WAS BURIED IN PETERBOROUGH
CATHEDRAL IN 1587. TWENTY-FIVE YEARS
LATER, HER REMAINS WERE EXHUMED BY HER
SON AND RE-INTERRED IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.



THE ARMADA

neighbourhood of the Castle, while stained windows and pictures were removed to Abbey Milton.

Mary was dead, but it seemed as if her tempestuous spirit hovered about Elizabeth. In dying she had left her claim to the English throne to the Infanta of Spain, Philip's daughter, and the arrogant Spanish monarch set out to enforce her rights by hurling his Invincible Armada against England. His vast fleet sailed in little more than a year after Mary's death, and was completely destroyed. "God blew with His wind, and they were scattered," was Elizabeth's exulting declaration, and her mighty triumph was the climax to the gales which, off the very coast whence Mary sailed as a helpless infant and to which

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she returned a hapless widow, wrecked such ships as the English sea-dogs had not destroyed in battle. Vicariously, however, Mary had conquered, for bitterly as Elizabeth disliked the thought of a Stuart succeeding her, it was certain that James would be the next monarch ; and on her death in 1603 Mary's son, that "wisest fool in Christendom," became the King.

Elizabeth was dead, and James had been King of England for three years—sixteen long years in all had passed—before the martyred Queen's remains were fitly honoured. Then her son, who had cruelly neglected her in life, feebly bestirred himself to give that recognition which was her dying wish. He commanded that a magnificent

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

velvet pall, embroidered with Mary's arms, should be placed upon her tomb, and this was done. There was another sermon by the Bishop, a second by the Dean, and a sumptuous feast. This was remembrance enough for nine more years, by which time James had placed a splendid monument to Elizabeth in Westminster Abbey. Then he atoned in part for his neglect by declaring that it was not well that Elizabeth should be in the royal resting-place in London and his mother left at Peterborough. He therefore had the corpse removed from the cathedral and re-interred in the Abbey in the capital, twenty-five years after the execution. Meanness overcame affection, for he directed that the old velvet pall should

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be used again, in the transfer of his
“dearest mother.”

It was late when the burial procession reached London—purposely late, since it was James’s wish to avoid excitement ; but, says a contemporary account, many in the streets and windows watched “her entry with honour into the place whence she had been expelled with tyranny.” “She is buried with honour, as dead rose-leaves are preserved, whence the liquor that makes the kingdom sweet has been distilled.” As quietly as could be, the fallen sovereign was entombed within whispering distance of the resting-place of her victorious antagonist.

In life Mary had been denied a meeting with her stern oppressor, and had been

REST

refused that sepulchre which she considered fitting to her queenly state.

In death, for more than three centuries, she has rested in the Abbey, almost side by side with that triumphant rival whom she never saw ; and of their royal tombs hers is the more costly and imposing.

THE END.

